

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ADDS 21 ANIMALS TO U.S. ENDANGERED SPECIES LISTS

Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton today announced the addition of 13 foreign and 8 native animals to the Department of the Interior's Lists of Endangered Fish and Wildlife.

"I take this action with both pleasure and sorrow," Morton said, "pleasure because we recently learned two U.S. animals we are adding--the eastern cougar and the Northern Rocky Mountain wolf--are not extinct; and sorrow because we are giving still more creatures the dubious distinction of being placed on our lists of endangered species."

Sightings of wolves in the vicinity of Yellowstone National Park and of cougars along the eastern seaboard give conservationists cause to believe small numbers of these animals have managed to survive in remote areas. "We hope our action will initiate efforts by all persons to help insure the survival not only of these 8 new additions to our native list but also of the 101 kinds of animals already on that list," Secretary Morton said. "Our challenge is to help these species recover to the point where they can be removed from the endangered lists."

The Department's action also pinned the official "endangered species" label on one animal from Mexico and 12 found in Australia, including some smaller kangaroos and other marsupials that are in serious jeopardy.

Morton stated that he had decided to temporarily defer making a decision on listing the more numerous red kangaroo, the eastern grey kangaroo and the western grey kangaroo because of recent actions taken by the Australian Government to protect these animals.

Information received recently indicates that the Australians are developing a coordinated management program for kangaroos which hopefully will provide them needed protection. In addition, action taken recently by the Australian Government which prohibits the export of kangaroos and any of their products also relieved pressure on the animals.

"The step taken by Senator Murphy, Australian Minister of Customs and Excise, in banning the export of kangaroos is both timely and courageous," Morton said. "That action reduces the threat to these three kangaroo species for the time being and influenced our decision to defer listing

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them. However, we plan to stay in close touch with Australian officials in order to keep current on the progress of their management program and the status of the export ban. We are sending a biologist from the Fish and Wildlife Service to Australia to review the status of these three species. Further action by the Department of the Interior will await completion of this report."

"A great deal of credit for the increased interest in kangaroos is due to the efforts of Mrs. Marian Newman who works for the Fund of Animals here in the U.S. and to Mrs. Florence Jones of the Kangaroo Protection Society of Australia," acknowledged Morton. "The facts and interest generated by these two people have played a major role in stimulating interest and action by agencies here and in Australia."

The eight animals added to the List of Endangered Native Fish and Wildlife are:

1. Utah prairie dog
2. Northern Rocky Mountain wolf
3. Eastern cougar
4. Mississippi sandhill crane
5. Puerto Rican whip-poor-will
6. Santa Barbara song sparrow
7. Desert slender salamander
8. Okaloosa darter--a tiny minnow found only in Okaloosa County, Florida

The 13 added to the List of Endangered Foreign Fish and Wildlife are:

1. Yellow-footed rock wallaby
2. Tasmanian forester
3. Desert bandicoot
4. Gaimard's rat kangaroo
5. Quokka
6. Queensland hairy-nosed wombat
7. Eastern native cat
8. Numbat
9. Stick-nest rat
10. Gould's mouse
11. Ground parrot
12. Plain wanderer
13. Aquatic box turtle

The aquatic box turtle is found in Mexico, the other 12 species are from Australia. The ground parrot and plain wanderer are birds, the Gould's mouse is a rodent, the remaining species are all marsupials with the rock wallaby, Tasmanian forester and quokka all being members of the kangaroo family.